

Progressive versus Anti-Progressive Academics

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“If society builds to sufficiently uncritical masses, it will implode.” — David Sztybel

Progressive Academics	Anti-Progressive Academics
Explore broader visions, avoiding oppressive ones except for the purposes of criticism. Give energy to work out the polished details of views that are consistent with opposing oppression, otherwise only considering details of oppressive ideologies as they become salient.	Almost exclusively are concerned with minor technical details of theories, and when these theories are practically relevant at all they may even be implicated in oppression.
Emphasize clear communication of ideas that might well overflow beyond academia and into public awareness.	Entangled in terminology and abstruse systems, proud of their exclusivity of specialization.
Reject hierarchy and authoritarianism, although this allows room for individuals or groups taking leadership initiatives which respect the autonomy of others.	Thrive on authoritarian practices, power over, privilege, and self-aggrandizement through prestigious positions and honours.
Question underlying assumptions.	Do not seriously challenge the <i>status quo</i> or perhaps “common sense.”
Aspire to at least sometimes contributing real solutions to real problems.	Aspire to a neutral, would-be scientific stance that has nothing to say on moral, practical, or social issues.
Promote growing to common understandings through dialogue in a constructive spirit, finding common ground or merit even in otherwise questionable views.	Divisively conflictual, engage in petty quibbling and even belittlement of other views.
Assertive about the need to oppose oppression.	Generally nihilistic about ethics, e.g., relativist or subjectivist (nothing is really right or wrong), to the point of not taking a consistent stand against oppression.
Cooperation, mutuality, and respect, with genuine interest in others and their ideas	Jealousy, divisiveness, and back-stabbing
Try to inspire students	Indifferent to whatever students may or may not get out of their scholarly pursuits